

History of the                       
First Presbyterian Church  
                     Mauch Chunk, Pa.

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Webster, Elizabeth.

History of the First

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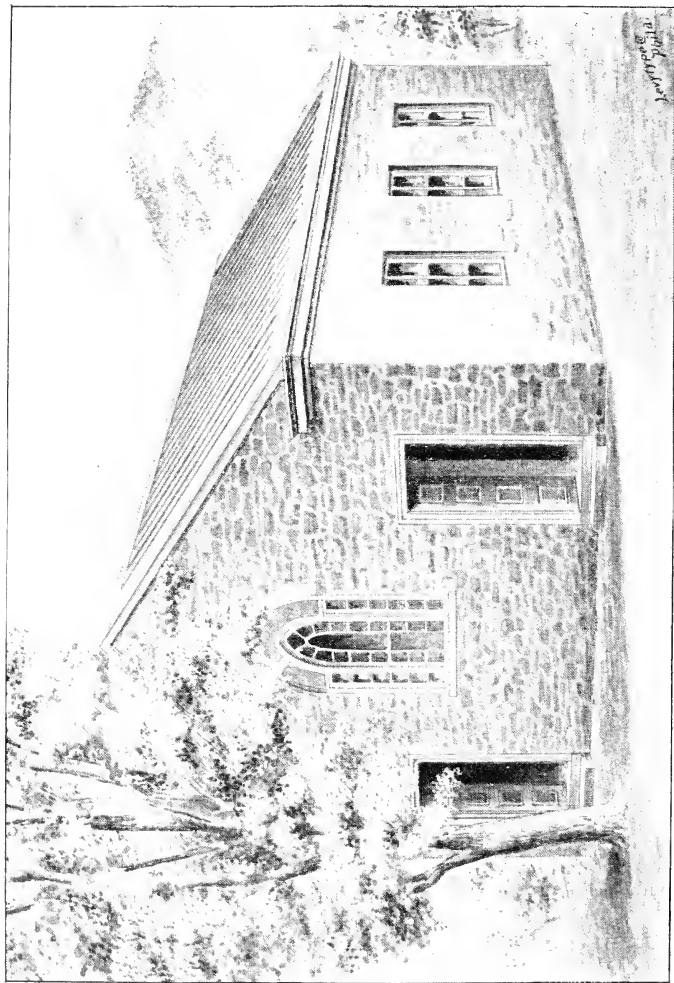












ORIGINAL FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, DEDICATED 1837.



HISTORY  
OF THE  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

OF  
MAUCH CHUNK, PA.,

BY  
ELIZABETH WEBSTER.

A RECORD OF SIXTY YEARS.

*“The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.”—Ps. 126-3.*

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MAUCH CHUNK, PA.:

NOVEMBER 1, 1895.



## P R E F A C E .

The record of the work of the Spirit of God, and the lives which were Providential instruments in that work, devout minds everywhere, love to cherish. The children of God find that their faith is strengthened, their continuance in prayer is quickened, and their devotion to duty is awakened when they look upon the unassailable evidences of the seasons of grace, which have come to this community and descended to them from their own fathers.

With that end in view, the Session of the First Presbyterian Church, of Mauch Chunk, Pa., desire to place in the hands of the members and friends of the Church and congregation, her history from the day of her organization to the present time. Into the life and growth of this Church, are interwoven many loved names and precious memories. The recital of these facts will, undoubtedly, bring vividly to the memory of many the stirring events of years ago, and also, with them, many other names and incidents, which it is impossible to place within the limits of this book. It is our earnest desire that this work may be richly blessed to the Church and people, and, from it, may the present and coming generations realize more fully the rich heritage which God has bequeathed to them in this Church in which their fathers worshipped and learned to

love and serve the Saviour, for, "Surely the Lord is in this place."

No one could have been better adapted to prepare this work than Miss Elizabeth Webster; being herself actively identified with the work of the Church, and, above all, the daughter of the godly man and devoted servant of Christ, who was the first pastor. The Session therefore requested her to prepare this history, and the readiness with which she entered upon, and the zeal with which she prosecuted the work, evidenced that to her it was truly a labor of love.

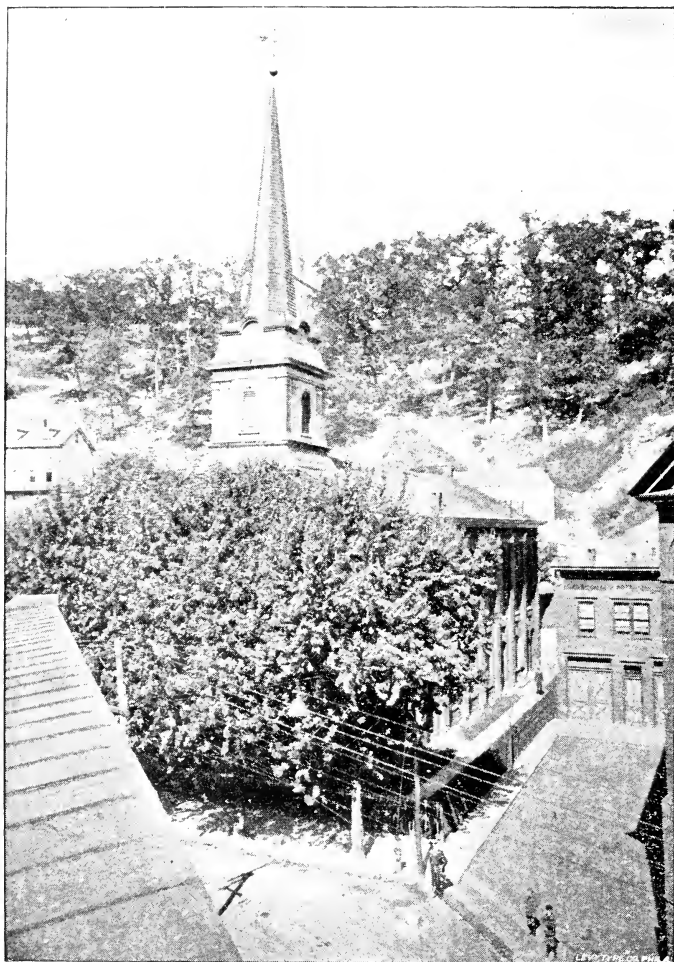
This history, written and published by order of the Session, is issued with the prayer that God's grace be out-poured upon our beloved Church.

REV. DUNCAN M. BUCHANAN,

*Moderator.*

*First Presbyterian Church,  
Mauch Chunk, Pa.,  
Nov. 1, 1895.*





*FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.*

HISTORY  
OF THE  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,  
OF  
MAUCH CHUNK, PA.

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WHEN the forty years of weary wandering in the wilderness were over, and the great hosts of Israel were ready to enter the Promised Land, they encountered one more obstacle. Between them and Canaan, the river Jordan, then at its greatest height, rushed past. By the Divine Hand of Omnipotence, those waters were held back until all had crossed safely. Before the mighty waters were permitted to return to their wonted place, the Lord commanded Joshua to have twelve stones taken from the river bed and carried to the first encampment, there to be set up for a "memorial unto the children of Israel forever." In future years, as other gener-

ations looked on that strange heap of stones they would be told the wonderful story of the passage over Jordan that the Lord's guidance of His people might be in perpetual remembrance. In our town stands a Church which is peculiarly dear to all who are or have been in its communion. Sixty years ago the First Presbyterian Church of Mauch Chunk was organized, and to-day we tell how it was founded in strong faith, earnest prayers, loving zeal, and ardent hopes that it might prove a memorial of the Lord's goodness to His people here. In recounting that history it has been thought best to dwell especially upon the early years which have so largely influenced and determined the character of our beloved Church. "We little know the anxieties, the prayers of agony, the denials, the sacrifices that are wrought in the foundations of this Church."\* It is also a record of victorious, overcoming faith, of unshaken trust in the covenant-keeping Jehovah, and in His care of His Church.

As we read this history may we realize as never before the priceless heritage our fathers have committed to us. Let us guard it with reverence and love, that we may give it to the next generation as pure, as holy as we received it from its founders.

In a sermon preached in this Church by the Pastor, Rev. Edsall Ferrier, D. D., in November, 1876, he says:

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\*Dr. Ferrier's Historical Sermon.



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“Previous to the year 1818, the place where this town now stands was an unbroken wilderness. The first coal operations in our vicinity were begun that year. In 1830 there were only seven hundred inhabitants in the town, and by the census of 1840 only twelve hundred; so that it is no reflection on the missionary spirit of our Church that the Presbytery did not effect an organization until 1835.”

Before that date, however, the needs of the coal fields of Pennsylvania were pressing upon the hearts of some of God's people who were anxious to undertake missionary work there. The request for the organization of a Presbyterian Church in Mauch Chunk came before the Presbytery of Newton, in 1835. In November, 1867, that Presbytery celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its organization, and the historical discourse was delivered by the Rev. David X. Junkin, D. D. In that sermon he gives the following interesting account of his visit to Mauch Chunk, the organization of the Church, and a brief sketch of its usefulness and the work it accomplished in our vicinity. “Perhaps the most interesting field ever entered by the missionary zeal of this Presbytery was that which now lies beyond her borders, in the great coal field of Pennsylvania. Previous to November 1st, 1835, there was no Presbyterian church north of Pottsville, in that vast and rich mountain country. There were a very few Presbyterians in it, but scattered and discouraged. In 1833 your historian, then a student in the Seminary, offered to

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spend a vacation laboring in Mauch Chunk and the vicinity; but his overtures were not favorably received. In the year 1835, a man\* whose wife had been a member of the Presbyterian Church became concerned for his soul, and so deep was his anxiety that, having heard of Dr. Gray of Easton, he wrote to him for counsel. The correspondence resulted in his coming to Easton to be received by the Session of that church to its membership, and [if my memory serves] Dr. Gray baptized him. This man went back to Mauch Chunk with his heart aglow with the fervors of first love, and was the instrument of kindling a desire for Church privileges and a Church organization in the minds of a few in that town and vicinity. A request was sent to Presbytery asking for the Gospel and for a church organization. The request was favorably considered, and a committee appointed to proceed to Mauch Chunk and organize a Church if the way should be clear. All of the members except Elder Enoch Green, and your present speaker, were prevented from attending. But on the last day of October, 1835, we arrived at Mauch Chunk. We held service that night and the next day in a small house of the Methodist Church, and on the first day of November organized a church of twenty-four members, and ordained three Elders.”

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\*Mr. George W. Smith.

The charter members were as follows :

Mr. and Mrs. James C. Bigger, James Lesly, Mrs. Abiel Abbott, Mr. and Mrs. Merrit Abbot, Mr. and Mrs. George Washington Smith, Mrs. Thomas Patterson, Mrs. John Wilson, John Simpson, Miss Margaret Youngs, Miss Agnes Youngs, Mrs. Daniel H. Connor, Miss Susan Hartz, Miss Mary Hartz, John Nichol, Alexander McLean, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Craig, John Lile, John B. Butler, Mrs. George Adair and Nathan Patterson.

Dr. Junkin continues :

“ Five weeks afterward your speaker again visited that town in company with his beloved friend and classmate, the lamented Rev. Richard Webster. We preached Friday and Saturday, and on Sabbath, December 6th, administered the Lord’s Supper—the first dispensed by Presbyterian hands in the Carbon coal field. Mr. Webster immediately entered upon indefatigable missionary work in that mountain region, and proved one of the most laborious and successful laborers I have ever known. The twenty-four communicants of which his Church was at first constituted were gathered from Mauch Chunk and Summit Hill, nine miles apart. But with the blessing of God upon his toil, zeal, and self-denial, and upon the fostering care and liberality of this Presbytery and her churches, the cause prospered in the coal field. Church after church was gathered and organized, pastor after pastor introduced, edifice after edifice constructed, until in 1843, the flourish

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ing and enterprising Presbytery of Luzerne was constituted, in part of churches set off from us. Beaver Meadow was organized in 1838; Summit Hill in April, 1839; Conyngham in April, 1842, and colonies from these followed in rapid succession at Hazleton, Weatherly, and many other points. That Presbytery now numbers two churches more than her mother. The Apostle of the Coal Fields, the lovely and lamented Webster, toiled on until he preached his last sermon on his death-bed, on June 19th, 1856."

After the visit described by Dr. Junkin and also fully recorded in our Session Book, the little church began its struggle for a permanent existence. The services were held in the Methodist church while efforts were made to secure a place of worship. The result of these efforts was the little stone church on West Broadway. By a mistaken economy and short-sighted policy the church was so small that every pew was rented before it was dedicated. As there was no room for enlargement, new families coming into the town could not find seats, and so became irregular in their attendance and almost of necessity compelled to worship elsewhere. That small church was a sad hindrance to the growth of the congregation and hampered the pastor in his work all his life. The Church was dedicated to the service of God in February, 1837. "The kindness and courtesy of the Methodists toward us, in the early days of our existence were marked; and when our

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first house of worship was completed, a letter of recognition was addressed to the Trustees—a letter, the careful and correct composition of which at once indicates the scholar, and the pious sentiments of which, so full, so warm-hearted, mark the devoted man of God. That letter was the production of the Rev. Richard Webster. A single quotation will indicate its general character: ‘We feel assured that we express not only our individual sentiments, but those of the Church and congregation to which we belong, when we say that your fraternal behavior in this instance is truly appreciated, and affectionately reciprocated. If ever, through change of circumstances, or any providential dispensation you should be without suitable accommodations for the public worship of God, it will be our privilege to open our house for your use and to show by our actions our grateful remembrance of what we have received. We pray that God will requite the kindness you have shown us, that He will multiply your members, and give to your people and your ministers the teaching of His Spirit and the comforts of His grace.’ ”\*

Mr. Webster began preaching in Mauch Chunk once a month in 1835; on the other Sabbaths he labored as a missionary far and near. In April, 1837, he was called to the pastoral charge, one-fourth of his time being employed at Summit Hill. He was installed pastor of the Church

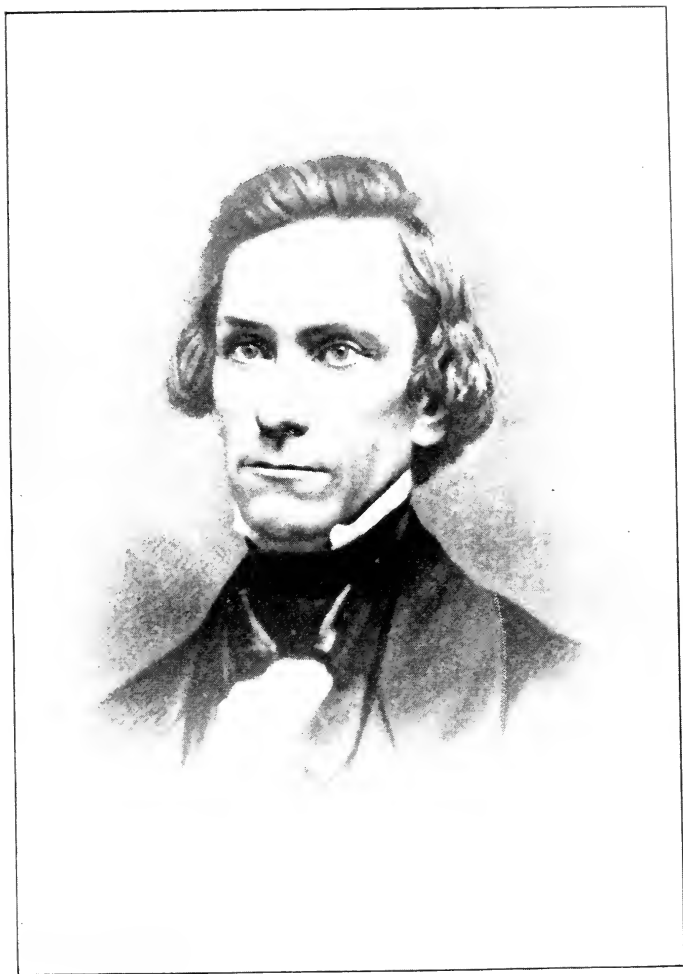
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\*Dr. Ferrier's Historical Sermon.

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in July 1837. In a letter written to his brother a few days later he says:—"The house was crowded. Mr. Irwin preached from Zech. 2:5: 'I will be a wall of fire round about thee, and the glory in the midst of thee.' Mr. Candee propounded the questions and delivered the charge to me, from the words, 'Cursed be the man that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully.' Mr. David X. Junkin gave the charge to the people. Everything was appropriate and solemn and we may well exclaim, 'Blessed be the Lord, for He hath showed me His marvellous loving kindness.'"

"The stability and prosperity of this Church, under God, are largely due to the character and piety of the first Pastor. If a man of inferior talents, or ordinary piety, or only a common consecration, had been the first Pastor, our Church to-day might have quite a different aspect. The congregation will always have occasion to thank the Head of the Church for that first gift. In looking over some old records, I am amazed at the extent and multiplicity of his labors. It is no wonder that his constitution, not very strong at the best, should have given away under such a burden, and that he should have fallen at the early age of forty-five. One who knew, said: 'He is recognized as the father of Luzerne Presbytery, and in some degree there was on him the care of all the churches.' In a letter written in December previous to his death he writes: 'I preached last month three times for brother Gaston. In



*REV. RICHARD WEBSTER.*





September, I preached ten times for my brethren in eight days.' Notwithstanding these arduous and extended labors, he did not neglect careful preparation for the pulpit. He brought nothing but beaten oil into the sanctuary. I make these statements from a careful examination of several of his sermons. The composition is as correct as if intended for the press. Several are composed with such accuracy of statement that scarcely a correction would be needed before giving them to the public. Like the man, his style has a singular simplicity and purity. His sermons are eminently scriptural. His only purpose seems to have been to exhibit the mind of the Spirit in the Word of God. The skill with which the passages are analyzed indicates more than ordinary mental abilities. One sermon on the reply of Agrippa to Paul, 'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian,' has unusual merit, and must have made a profound impression on any congregation that heard it. In its analysis, spiritual tone, style and solemn and spiritual lessons, it is a model. The last sermon he ever preached to this congregation, was from the text, 'Enoch walked with God and was not, for God took him.' It was so solemn an occasion that Rev. Mr. Cross in a published sermon says: 'Many of the congregation thought at the time, and some of them remarked that it seemed as if he was preaching his last sermon.' His attachment to the Church was very great. It was his only pastoral charge. One of his last utterances was, 'May

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God be with my people, I loved to preach the Gospel to them. I thank God for permitting me to preach the Gospel to them. I thank God for permitting me to preach it to *one* people.' The Church was very dear to him, and the very walls seemed graven on the palms of his hands."\*

The Rev. Courtlandt Van Rensselaer, D.D., Mr. Webster's life-long friend, and his biographer, says: "God gave to Richard Webster a good vigorous intellect. Even a casual observer could not fail to see the flashes of intelligence which emanated from no ordinary mental constitution. Well cultivated in early life, his mind expanded under the influence of the collegiate and theological course, and received great strength and discipline from the higher studies incident to his profession. He was a hard student all his life. He became more and more familiar with the original languages of Scripture, and prosecuted his theological studies to an extent quite unusual among the temptations of our active missionary life.

"Richard Webster early professed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and while the 'dew of youth' was upon him, united himself with the followers of the Redeemer. He was a holy man. No one could mistake the purpose of his life. His heart was in the ministry of reconciliation. Devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ was his reigning passion. He had consecrated himself to his

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\*Dr. Ferrier's Historical Sermon.

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Master's service with a view to preach the Gospel among the heathen ; but when Providence seemed to throw obstacles in this direction of his choice, he joyfully went to a missionary field at home, doubtless under the guidance of his Heavenly Father, who greatly blessed him in his labors. Living a zealous, self-denying, and active life, he accomplished much for the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom. A tender compassion for souls was the beauty and power of his ministerial character. A sweet, earnest love, that came from God, enabled him to toil on in the destitute coal regions of Pennsylvania, edifying the saints and exhorting sinners to repentance. The Rev. A. B. Cross, who preached his funeral sermon, fitly chose for his text : 'Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe ; as ye know how we exhorted and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children.'—(1 Thess. 2:10-12).''\*

With the same self-devotion which led him to consecrate his life to work in the Marathi Mission, India, he sought for a destitute field in his own land. The young minister, for he was only twenty-four years old when he came to Mauch Chunk, in entering upon his arduous life-work voluntarily gave up all thought of earthly preferment or honor. That the sacrifice was made lovingly, joyfully

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\*Biographical Sketch.

is evident from his whole life, and we have his own testimony in a letter written to his brother in 1838. He writes: "I love the place, the people and all about it, and have as completely identified myself with it in interest and affection, as if I had first breathed here, and as if it were Earth's only spot of brightness and of rest. I came to this little field, and here I began to love and to be loved, and every part of the village is connected with some delightful remembrance."

"Mr. Webster was passionately devoted to the Presbyterian Church, holding our Faith and Order to be the very primitive form and mould of apostolic truth, he could conceive nothing more noble and venerable than Calvinism and Presbyterianism. Around the Church he poured the wealth of his reverence, his imagination, and his affection."\*

"His principal work, aside from his regular ministry of the Gospel, was 'The History of the Presbyterian Church in America, from its origin until the year 1760,' an octavo volume, published by authority of the Presbyterian Historical Society. This book was a sort of recreation, from year to year, from his regular pastoral work. Few ministers use their vacations so laboriously. The difficulties in the way of collecting material, and the variety of sources from which it had to come, will lead any reader

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\*Rev. Benjamin J. Wallace, D. D.

who looks over the lives of one hundred and ninety-six ministers and the history of the churches until 1760, and finds the amount of information collected to wonder how, in the whole life of his ministry he accomplished it. Yet he collected more than would make another volume as large, and was increasing his stores constantly until his death.”\*

We have dwelt thus fully upon these characteristics of the first Pastor because we believe that they have been indelibly impressed upon our Church, and have influenced its whole character and history.

Almost immediately after the installation of Mr. Webster, evidences of the power of the Holy Spirit in the Church were manifest; and the pastor records with deep gratitude the encouragements, especially that during the year, “several aged persons have been awakened to their need of the Saviour.” At every meeting of Session persons were received into the membership of the Church, but only after most careful and thorough examination. The growth of the Church, though not rapid, was very encouraging. In the minutes of Session the Pastor often remarks that, “The deeply interesting state of things in our congregation was the subject of conversation.”

In the Sessional Report to the Presbytery of Newton in 1841, Mr. Webster writes: “During the past year the

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\*Rev. Andrew B. Cross.

attendance on public worship has been good, but since the commencement of 1841, there has been manifestly an increased interest in the service of God's House, and so strikingly did the Divine interposition appear, that the Pastor began about the middle of March to preach regularly nearly every night in the week. A blessing followed this service, developing itself in the enlargement of the spirit of prayer, and in the union and activity of Christians. These services were continued with but little intermission for four weeks. They were accompanied by pastoral visitation and conversation in private with those who were disquieted in their minds. The weekly prayer-meetings and the female prayer-meetings have been attended regularly and with increasing interest. At no period of our history have the prospects of our congregation in a spiritual point of view, been so delightful and encouraging as at the present time."\*

In April, 1842, we find in the Report of Session to Presbytery even greater encouragements. "During the past year there has been good attendance on public worship, and upon the preaching of the Word and the meetings for prayer, and for the last six months there has been a larger attendance than at any former period, and there has been much to encourage the hope that God was moving in many hearts. Six persons have been added on

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\*Session Book, Vol. 1. pp. 33, 34.

profession of their faith, and others have applied but their request was not granted that they might have further opportunity of increasing their knowledge and testing their stability.”\*

The narrative of Religion, April 2nd, 1843, sounds like a psalm of praise and thanksgiving. As the only *written* record of the great revival of 1842 we feel that almost every word will be of deep interest. “Since the month of February, 1842, encouraging tokens were observable; our number of members rose to fifty. The deep interest manifested by teachers and scholars in our Sabbath-school, and the increasing attendance on the sanctuary seemed to promise a season of refreshing. During the summer, five or six were added to the Church, but upon the Sabbath in September appointed by the General Assembly as a day of humiliation and prayer, the gracious presence of God was displayed. In the course of four or five weeks, upwards of sixty persons were brought into a state of deep distress; they were humbled on account of their sins, and mercifully led, as we hope, to Christ. All was accomplished by the ordinary services of the Pastor, in visiting and preaching, and by the faithful co operation and persevering prayers of the people of God. Many who have long been disquieted with a sense of their lost condition and vileness, now begin to rejoice in Christ, and

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\*Session Book, Vol. 1, p. 36.

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careless open neglecters, roused by some inconsiderable circumstances to think about their souls, pressed into the kingdom of God. The interest excited in the temperance reformation was doubtless a good preparative in the case of many ; they considered the question of their duty in regard to intoxicating drinks, and thus having recognized their responsibility, their awakened conscience led them to deeper and heart-searching inquiries. The improvement in our village in respect to peacefulness, Sabbath-keeping, attendance on public worship and in domestic happiness is manifest and deserving of devout acknowledgement. During the year, fourteen husbands with their wives, have professed their faith in Christ ; very few who are quite young have been received to the communion. Fifty-six have been gathered in and we have reason to hope that many more will ere long be welcomed to the Table of the Lord.

“As a result of this precious awakening, we note :

1. The enlargement of our congregation by at least one-third, and the increase of regular and solemn attendance on the house of God.

2. The prosperity of our Sabbath-school. It is under the care of Session and was a prime cause under God of preparing many souls to receive the word with gladness. We have now twenty-four teachers, a large proportion of whom have newly entered on the work, to supply vacancies occasioned by removal, and to take charge of new



classes. Fifteen teachers have given themselves publicly to the Lord, nearly all the others were either previously communicants or are hopefully converted. A considerable number of the scholars are, we trust, objects of renewing grace.

3. Social meetings have been established, and kept up with interest. Beside the weekly lecture on Wednesday, there have been through the winter a prayer meeting on Tuesday, a female prayer meeting on Thursday, and a young men's prayer meeting on Friday. In these nearly all our communicants take part.

4. A small neighborhood distant four miles, has been visited, a prayer meeting established, and a Sabbath-school gathered with six teachers and thirty scholars. Not a few of the residents there assemble punctually with us on the Sabbath, and nearly every person, male or female is present at the semi-monthly preaching of the Gospel there.

5. There is also an adult Bible class, conducted by one of the Elders on Sabbath afternoon with happy results.

“The Session cannot fail to record that the chief and honored instrumentality in all the good that has been done, was the one appointed of God, viz: the steady, uniform declaration and enforcement of divine truth,—visiting frequently and carefully from house to house, especially in seasons of distress, family and Sabbath-school instructions, and the working of the people with the Pastor in secret prayer, social meetings, and private and affectionate ex

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hortation and entreaty. These were the means, and they were carefully, and abundantly and patiently used, but God gave the increase.

“On the review of the undeserved mercy of the Lord toward us, we see that we have abundant reason for thanksgiving, and we feel solemnly called to labor with our might from henceforth and with hope. The congregation is united and growing, the great truths of the Gospel are plainly and steadily preached, and we rejoice to believe that many are growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. To God be the praise.”\*

Of this precious revival Dr. Ferrier said: “It differed from other revivals in its depth and thoroughness, and in the fact that it extended beyond the congregation. Conviction of sin came upon men with a peculiar pungency while they were at their work. There was a singular awe in the stores, and shops, and offices. It was such a revival as is needed now. A revival *in* a congregation and in a Sabbath-school is a matter for devout thankfulness, but is there not a power somewhere to reach those who never enter the church? In the annual report for 1842, though there were only fifty members of the Church, sixty-one additional members were received during that year. It was a blessing and an ingathering that gave an impulse to the Church that is felt to this hour.”†

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\*Session Book, Vol. 1, p. 43-45.

†Historical Sermon.

“ In May, 1843, the General Assembly (Old School), set off this Church from the Presbytery of Newton, to be with several others erected into the Presbytery of Luzerne.”\*

For several successive years there is a sad tone in the Sessional Records regarding the spiritual interests of the Church. Again and again in the Annual Narrative of Religion does the Pastor lament the condition of the Church, and his heart is over-whelmed with sorrow as he mourns the indifference of those in whose spiritual welfare he was so deeply interested. In 1844 he writes: “There has been a remarkable indifference on the part of those who are out of the Church. \* \* \* And over this lamentable state of things, the professed followers of Christ have not mourned. \* \* \* Great searchings of heart are needed, for there is none that stirreth up himself to take hold on God.”†

Again, in April, 1845: “Lack of interest in the meetings for prayer and in the public services of God’s House has been painfully apparent. The love of many has waxed cold. Still we have reason to believe that the Word, regularly, faithfully, and earnestly preached has been blessed to the strengthening in grace of some of God’s people, and we hope that there are in our congregation several

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\*Session Book, Vol. 2, p. 1.

†Session Book Vol. 1, p. 41.

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whom the Holy Spirit is making ready as a people prepared for the Lord.”\*

“August 9, 1848. The lamentable decline of religion being of long continuance and sadly on the increase it was resolved that a letter to each member of our Church be prepared.”†

One who was a member of our Church at that time has written: “Especially on one occasion I remember how deeply he was affected. His heart seemed overwhelmed within him. I went, in company with a mutual friend of his and mine, with a view of administering some word of comfort. He freely unbosomed to us his whole soul; and truly his feelings were such as could arise from nothing less than the most vivid apprehension of spiritual things, the value of the soul, and the worth of the Saviour.”‡

At last the cloud lifted: in 1849, many encouragements are noted and the spiritual and temporal interests of the Church began to advance.

The anniversary of the first administration of the Lord’s Supper, the first Sabbath in December, was frequently “Set apart as a day of thanksgiving, to record the Lord’s goodness to us as a people.” At this time, in 1848, the Pastor records: “The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was administered, it being the commencement of the

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\*Session Book, Vol. I, p. 58.

†Ibid, p. 62.

‡Rev. James Scott, in Biographical Sketch.

fourteenth year of the Pastor's stated labors here, and the fourteenth anniversary of the administration of the Lord's Supper. Of the eighty-seven communicants belonging to the Church, fifty-two partook of the ordinances \* \* the absence of nine only being unexplained." \*

On another anniversary the Session invited the Rev. D. X. Junkin, D. D. to be present and preach the sermon.

"By the year 1850, the congregation had grown so rapidly that a new and larger church was necessary. In September 1855, or five years after the first agitation of the subject, the corner stone of the present house of worship was laid. Addresses were made by the Pastor, Rev. Mr. Webster, Rev. Mr. Glen, of Tamaqua, and Rev. Thomas P. Hunt, of Wyoming." †

The last entry made in the Session Book by Mr. Webster bears the date of April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1856, and relates to the examination and reception into the Church of some new members, and to the regular work of Session. At this time also, he notes that there are now in the communion of our Church one hundred and three persons.

The next entry, written by Elder Charles G. Rockwood, reads: "June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1856. The Pastor of this Church, Rev. Richard Webster, died this day at a quarter before twelve o'clock, A. M., in calm and peaceful depend-

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\*Session Book, Vol. I. pp. 68, 69.

†Dr. Ferrier's Historical Sermon.

ence upon the atonement and righteousness of the Saviour, and in assured hope of a blessed immortality. With strong faith he committed the *Church* as well as his family to the care of a faithful God." \*

A few days later, resolutions expressive of the feelings of Session on the loss of our late Pastor," prepared by Elder Smith, were adopted and spread on the Session Book. We make a few extracts: "Whereas, it has pleased God, in His all-wise Providence, on the 19th day of June, 1856, to remove from us to the rest prepared for His people, our much loved Pastor, the Rev. Richard Webster, in the forty-fifth year of his age, after twenty-one years of zealous labor in the cause of Christ. Therefore

*Resolved*, That we hereby bear our testimony to the zeal and energy with which he our first and only Pastor labored among us during the whole of his ministerial life.

*Resolved*, That while we mourn his loss as a missionary, pastor, presbyter, friend and brother, we humbly bow to the will of God, thanking Him for being permitted to witness in his peaceful death, the power of that faith, love and sustaining grace which he so often preached to others." †

The same week, a special meeting of the Presbytery of Luzerne, was held at Scranton, "to take into consideration matters connected with the death of Rev. Richard Webster, Stated Clerk of Presbytery and Chairman of the Commit-

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\*Session Book, Vol. 11, p. 52.

†Session Book Vol. 11, p. 52.

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tee on Domestic missions." The resolutions adopted by Presbytery were ordered to be read in the Church on Sabbath, July 6th, and also copied in the Session Book. Presbytery records its "grief at the loss of our greatly beloved Brother, valued co-presbyter and Stated Clerk, an able and judicious counsellor, a warm-hearted and zealous fellow-laborer and the founder of this Presbytery." Also, that the "Church of Christ has been deprived of an erudite historian, as well as earnest and faithful minister; this great missionary field, of a fearless and indefatigable pioneer-missionary; and humanity, of a willing and trusty friend." \*

"What a legacy has been left to this Church! I fear that you do not prize it as you ought. Such a memory is more than gold. It should make this people devoted and thankful. The talents, the piety, the consecration of your first Pastor might have given him an honored place in some of the prominent pulpits in the land. He sought alone the higher honor that comes from winning souls to Jesus. He chose to give his time, his culture, his talents, his very life to you; with you he lived and labored and died. Being dead he yet speaks. O let him always speak to your hearts. His example and his life yet linger in blessed memory around the homes of this town. Though other pastors have followed him, something imperishably connected with him yet walks here among his beloved flock, visiting their

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\*Session Book Vol. 11, p. 54.

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homes, comforting the mourner, warning the careless and teaching the ignorant, and in this pulpit reasoning of righteousness and temperance and judgment.”

July 20th, 1856, or less than one year after the laying of the corner-stone, the basement was occupied for public worship. Elder Charles G. Rockwood writes: “The congregation and Sunday-school to-day abandoned the old church building, and public school building, and removed to the *new*:—the basement of which being now finished will hereafter be occupied for public worship until the edifice is completed. The Rev. Dr. Thomas E. Vermilye, of the Collegiate Reformed Dutch Church, New York City, preached in the new room morning and evening. \* \* \* This occasion, as an earnest of the fulfillment of long deferred hopes for the completion of the new Church, so much needed; was a pleasant and cheering one, notwithstanding the deeply felt absence of the Pastor whose voice (now tuned to the melodies of Heaven) we had so fondly hoped to hear in the new house. The Lecture Room is commodious and pleasant for public worship, and (with a separate room for the Infant School) affords to the Sunday-schools ample and *cheerful* accommodations in great contrast with the public school rooms heretofore occupied.”†

At a congregational meeting held on the 24th of Nov-

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\*Dr. Ferrier's Historical Sermon.

†Session Book, Vol. 11, p. 55.



ember, 1856, a call was extended to the Rev. J. Aspinwall Hodge, a licentiate under the care of the First Presbytery of Philadelphia, to become Pastor of this Church. The call was accepted and on the 21st of December, 1856, at the request of Session, Mr. Hodge began his labors here as Stated Supply.

The Narrative of Religion, prepared by Elder Rockwood, April, 1857, is of especial interest. "The last year has been an eventful one to our Church, and while it has wrought deep affliction, in the removal by death of our lamented Pastor, Rev. Richard Webster, has still been marked with prosperity in the affairs of the Church, and with unusual encouragement to labor more prayerfully and earnestly for the salvation of souls. Increased attention to the preaching of the truth was observable before the death of our Pastor. A marked seriousness followed our bereavement, and it is thought that some souls may trace their first serious impressions to the death-bed scene which was peculiarly impressive. \* \* \* \* At the recent Communion, ten persons were added to the Church, on profession of their faith, one being a scholar in the Sabbath-school; and others are hopefully serious, giving reason to trust that God's Holy Spirit is present with us. During the year, fourteen have united with the Church on profession of their faith, of whom twelve were heads of families. \* \* \* \* The Monthly Concert for Prayer is regularly observed. An improvement over former years

is shown in our contributions for Missionary and Congregational purposes. \* \* \* One hundred and ten are now in communion. Finally—we are at peace among ourselves, and as a congregation, entirely united.” \*

The Presbytery of Luzerne held its regular Spring meeting here in 1857, and on the evening of April 22nd, Rev. J. Aspinwall Hodge was ordained, and installed Pastor. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Charles Hodge, D. D., L. L. D., of Princeton Theological Seminary; the charge to the Pastor was given by the Rev. A. G. Harned, and the charge to the people by the Rev. John Johnson. The pastoral relation constituted at that time continued eight years.

Mr. Hodge came to our Church a young man, fresh from his theological studies at Princeton, full of zeal and determination to do his work faithfully and well. He bore the name which stands so high in the history of the Presbyterian Church, which holds such an honored place in her ministry and eldership, and which is known and loved by all Presbyterians. “*Our* Mr. Hodge” has by a long and faithful ministry, by unswerving devotion to the purity of our beloved Church in doctrine and government added new lustre to that honored name.

Mr. Hodge began his ministry here with all the enthusiasm and love of his nature, and our written records

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*REV. J. ASPINWALL HODGE, D. D.*



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as well as the testimony of those who loved him attest his faithfulness and care as Pastor. During his pastorate the fearful shadow of the great Civil War rested on our land, and political excitement interfered sadly with the spiritual interests, the peace and harmony of many churches. But through it all our Church was kept by the loving care of God, and at last peace and unity were restored to our land.

“Under the ministry of Mr. Hodge, the Church made good progress. The house of worship was completed, the congregation increased in numbers, and though there was no extensive revival, many from time to time were added to the Church. During the eight years of his ministry about one hundred were added to the communion of the Church.”\*

In 1858, the Session resolved “to hold a prayer-meeting in the Lecture room every Sabbath morning at ten o’clock to beseech God to bless His Word in the conversion of those who are out of Christ.” Many have spoken of these early meetings as seasons of prayer very precious to their souls. The Pastor also held a prayer-meeting for young men.

On June 12th, 1859, an event of great importance in our history took place, when the new Church was solemnly dedicated to the worship of God. By special request of Session the Rev. D. X. Junkin, D. D., who had been so

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\*Dr. Ferrier’s Historical Sermon.

closely associated with this Church from the day of its organization, preached the sermon. The dedicatory prayer was offered by the Rev. Thomas P. Hunt. In the evening, the sermon was preached by the Rev. Charles W. Shields, D. D., of Philadelphia.

“February 11th, 1865, the Pastor requested the Session to grant him permission to call a meeting of the congregation to unite with him in petitioning Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relation which had existed eight years.”\* The congregational meeting was held on the 20th of February, and Mr. Hodge’s request granted “with great regret.” The resolutions adopted at the meeting and entered on the Session Book mention that, “By his urbanity and gentlemanly deportment, by his Christian zeal and faithfulness as a Pastor : and by his untiring devotion to the spiritual as well as temporal interests of this Church. Mr. Hodge has greatly endeared himself to his people and will always be remembered by them with grateful affection.”†

Soon after leaving Mauch Chunk, Mr. Hodge accepted a call to the First Presbyterian Church of Hartford, Conn., and remained there twenty-six years (1866-1892.) In 1874, Princeton College conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. In 1892, Dr. Hodge resigned his pastoral

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\*Session Book, Vol. II, p. 140.

†Session Book, Vol. II, p. 142.

charge on account of his health, and was at once made Pastor Emeritus. In 1893, he accepted the professorship of the English Bible in Lincoln University. In addition to his labors as Pastor, Presbyterian Professor, Dr. Hodge has written and published several valuable books. His largest and most important book, "What is Presbyterian Law?" has proved invaluable to Pastors and Sessions. Besides all these services to the Church he loves so well, Dr. Hodge has given three sons to her ministry.

For almost a year after the resignation of Mr. Hodge, our pulpit was supplied with great satisfaction to the people, by the Rev. Charles J. Collins, of Wilkes-Barre. During that time the congregation extended a call to the Rev. Dr. Sheddan, of Rahway, New Jersey. To the disappointment of many, the call was declined. Again, March 26th, 1866, a "heartly and unanimous call was given to the Rev. F. R. Masters, of Matteawan, New York." The call was prosecuted before the Presbytery of North River by commissioners from our Church, who represented the great need of a pastor, and the unanimity of the desire for Mr. Masters. Presbytery, after hearing both sides, and carefully considering the question, decided that in view of the extreme reluctance of the people at Matteawan to part with their Pastor, the call should not be placed in Mr. Masters' hands. "So our Church found itself still without a Pastor."

Later, in the same year, a unanimous call was given

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to the Rev. Jacob Belville, of Holmesburg, Pa. Mr. Belville accepted the call and was installed Pastor, November 1st, 1866. Rev. Dr. Newlin, of Hazleton, preached the sermon, Rev. Mr. Park, of Pittston, delivered the charge to the Pastor, and the Rev. Dr. Hickok, of Scranton, the charge to the congregation.

Under Dr. Belville's ministry, our Church was richly blessed, temporally and spiritually. A decided advance in every respect was made. The congregation, perfectly united and harmonious, was enlarged and strengthened and able to undertake more aggressive work. The burden of debt which had rested upon the Church for many years was removed. At that time, the bell which has all these years called the people to the house of God, and which is associated with so much of our Church life, was given by that generous and devoted friend, Mrs. Andrew A. Douglas. But no adequate mention can be made here of the unfailing liberality of this noble friend whose name is enrolled on high among those holy women, who on earth ministered to our Lord of their substance. The contributions, for all causes, were larger than ever before, and constantly advanced by the Pastor's faithful and earnest presentation of the work of the Boards of the Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Belville was very active in his pastoral work, and until failing health compelled him to give up much of the work in which he so delighted, he held three prayer meet-





*REV. JACOB BELVILLE, D. D.*



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ings each week, had three Sabbath-schools under his care, and frequently preached three times on the Lord's Day.

In 1871, the title of Doctor of Divinity was given to Mr. Belville by Lafayette College.

After the re-union of the two branches of the Presbyterian Church, in 1870, the historic Presbytery of Luzerne, was dissolved, and it no longer appears on the roll of the General Assembly. While its history has not yet been fully written, Luzerne Presbytery has a permanent and glorious memorial in its vast missionary work in the coal fields, and in the large and flourishing churches organized by it and sustained for many years by its wise and loving care. As it was largely through the missionary work and unwearied zeal of the first Pastor of our Church that the need for the Presbytery of Luzerne arose, we have a peculiar interest in its history. June 22nd, 1870, the Presbytery of Lehigh was organized by the Synod of Philadelphia, and the Church of Mauch Chunk transferred to its jurisdiction.

In 1866, Session decided to change the time of the administration of the Lord's Supper, and since that time it has been celebrated on the second Sabbath of January, April, July and October.

In January, 1873, Dr. Belville resigned his pastoral charge here, that he might accept a call to the First Presbyterian Church, of Pottsville. The resolutions adopted at the congregational meeting speak of the regret felt by all at the dissolution of this pastoral relation, and also

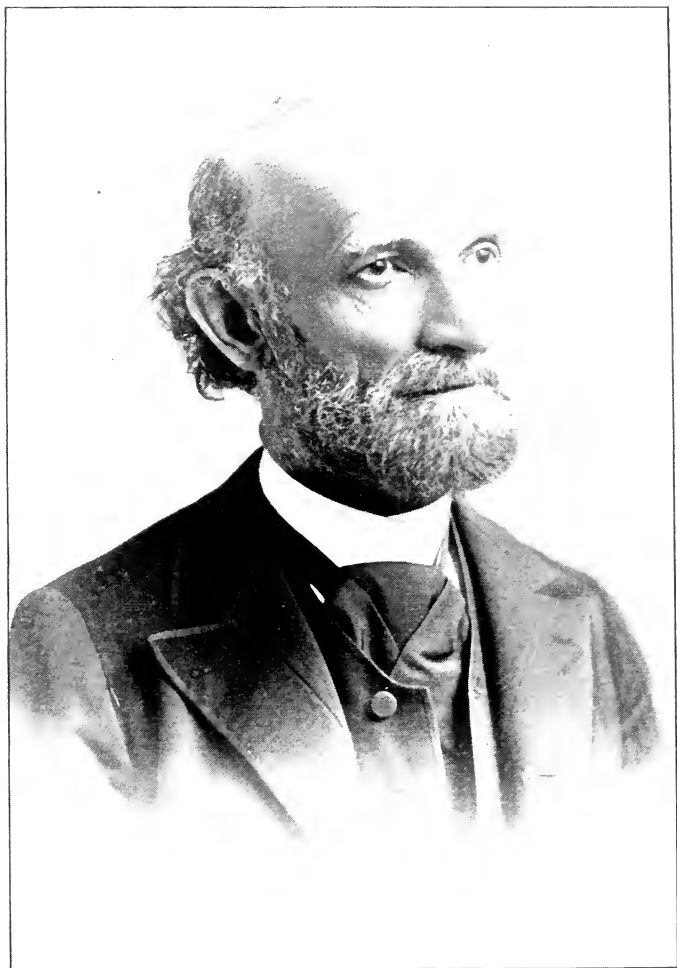
record the high appreciation of his "pastoral fidelity and Christian worth," but add that "we ought not in any way to prevent him from doing what appears to him a duty."

The pastoral relation, which had existed for six years and three months, was dissolved by the Presbytery of Lehigh at a special meeting held in our Church in February, 1873.

Dr. Belville continued Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, of Pottsville, until 1894, when he resigned and became Pastor Emeritus. Dr. Belville has enjoyed the privilege of preaching the Gospel for fifty years.

In June, 1873, Rev. Edsall Ferrier, of Easton, preached for us, and at the urgent request of Session he supplied the pulpit during the entire Summer. So much did he endear himself to the people that he was unanimously and most enthusiastically called to be our Pastor. On Friday evening, October 31st, 1873, Mr. Ferrier was installed. The sermon was preached by the Rev. J. Allen Maxwell, of Hazleton: the charge to the people was given by the Rev. Wm. C. Cattell, D. D., President of Lafayette College, and the charge to the Pastor, by the Rev. Jacob Belville, D. D., of Pottsville.

Almost immediately after Mr. Ferrier's coming to us, a deep interest in spiritual things was manifest, and this continued during his entire pastorate. It may truthfully be said that the presence and power of the Holy Spirit



*REV. EDSALL FERRIER, D. D.*



were always with us during those years. We refer, not merely to the numerous additions to the Church, but also to the fact that the Lord's people were continually refreshed and strengthened in their christian life. The weekly prayer meeting was largely attended, and a meeting for the young people was sustained with much interest and enthusiasm. Frequently special services were held and always welcomed by the people. The Pastor led a short prayer-meeting before service on Sabbath morning, and many can remember the pleasant half hour spent in the Lecture room. A strong love for our Church was developed, and many of our most active members feel that they owe much to the great privilege they enjoyed in having Dr. Ferrier's training and teaching. Lafayette College conferred the title of Doctor of Divinity on our Pastor in 1881.

In the Week of Prayer, 1875, an unusual religious interest was felt, the Lecture room was filled every evening, and many professed their faith in Christ as a personal Saviour. We find the following minute entered by Dr. Ferrier: "Special record is made of the fact that on our Communion Sabbath, January 12th, 1875, sixty persons sat for the first time at the Table of our Lord. To God be all the glory for this wonderful work. On the afternoon of the Sabbath special thanksgiving services were held, recognizing the goodness and grace of God."\*

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\*Session Book, Vol. IV, p 6.

Again: "In special recognition of the grace of God, we record the fact that on Sabbath morning, March 28th, 1875, thirty-eight persons took their places for the first time at the Lord's Table."\*

Many will remember this revival of 1875 as one which was specially blessed to their souls.

Again we read: "In special recognition of the grace of God, we record that on Sabbath morning, January 11th, 1880, thirty persons took their seats for the first time at the Lord's Table."†

Under Dr. Ferrier's ministry, the missionary spirit of our Church was greatly quickened by the organization of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, and the Foreign Mission Bands among the young people and children. To this work, Dr. Ferrier gave from the first his unqualified approval and unfailing support, and the marked success of these organizations during all these years is largely owing to him.

Dr. Ferrier identified himself with all the religious and evangelistic work undertaken by some of the young men of our Church, and his presence at the Hose House meetings on Sabbath afternoon, and his earnest appeals to the railroad men were blessed to the salvation of many.

In 1883, Dr. Ferrier presented his resignation on account of failing health, but he was urged to remain Pastor

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\*Session Book, Vol. IV, p. 8.

†Session Book, Vol. IV, p. 21.





*REV. WEBSTER WOODBURY.*



and take a long vacation. After nearly six months of absence he renewed his request, saying that the state of his health convinced him that it was the will of God that he should not resume his labors here. With great sorrow the congregation acceded to this urgent request, and, "At a special meeting of Lehigh Presbytery held in Pottsville, January 15th, 1884, the pastoral relation between the Rev. Edsall Ferrier, D. D., and the First Presbyterian Church, of Mauch Chunk, was dissolved, after a pastorate of ten years and two months."\*

Dr. Ferrier has never taken another pastoral charge, but has devoted himself to preaching, active evangelistic work and literary labors. In 1893, he became Professor of Hebrew in Lafayette College.

November 23rd, 1884, a call was extended to the Rev. Webster Woodbury, of Foxboro, Mass., a minister of the Congregational Church. He was installed Pastor on February 3rd, 1885. Rev. John Pollock, of Allentown, preached the sermon; the Rev. Dr. Belville gave the charge to the Pastor, and the Rev. Edsall Ferrier, D. D., the charge to the congregation.

Mr. Woodbury's pastorate lasted three years and three months, being dissolved at his request by Lehigh Presbytery on the 17th of April, 1888.

At this time began the removal from town of many of

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\*Session Book, Vol. IV. p. 31.

our active and useful members. These losses were saddening and discouraging to Mr. Woodbury as they have been to his successors. Mr. Woodbury was deeply interested in the young people, and the Society of Christian Endeavor was organized by him, and owes much to his loving, faithful care and guidance.

During this pastorate, our Chapel, in East Mauch Chunk, was built and dedicated. Mr. Woodbury was very devoted to the Sabbath-school, and all the work of our people in East Mauch Chunk. Mr. Woodbury left us to accept a call to the Congregational Church, in Milford, Mass., where he is still engaged in active and successful pastoral work.

On the 25th of June, 1888, a unanimous call was given to the Rev. W. P. Stevenson, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, at West Bellevue, Pa. Mr. Stevenson was installed on September 28th, 1888. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Douglas Carlile, of Easton, the charge to the Pastor was given by the Rev. Dr. Belville, and that to the people by the Rev. Dr. Ferrier.

Mr. Stevenson's pastorate was a time of great prosperity to our Church in almost every respect. The services on Sabbath were well attended, as were all of the week-night meetings; the benevolent contributions were larger than in previous years, and at the close of his ministry here Mr. Stevenson was able to record: "The prosperous condition of all departments of Church work."



*REV. WILLIAM P. STEVENSON.*



The Week of Prayer, 1889, was of unusual interest and solemnity. The Lecture room was crowded every night, and a deep religious interest pervaded all the services. In view of this interest, Session decided to continue the meetings another week, during which, the large attendance and the interest were very marked. A number were received into the communion of the church at that time and during the following months. Mr. Stevenson, writes, April 14th, 1889: "The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was observed this morning by a large congregation. We note it as worthy of special thanksgiving, that within the past six months, one hundred names have been added to our roll, eighty four by profession and sixteen by certificate."\*

Again, April 13th, 1890: "The Session desire to put on record their gratitude to God for the many tokens of His love and favor granted to us during the past few months. Our house of worship has been most beautifully remodeled and adorned, large congregations assemble morning and evening to hear the Gospel preached and harmony prevails."†

In March, 1891, Mr. Stevenson received a call to the First Presbyterian Church, of Titusville, Pa., which he accepted. The pastoral relation which had existed two years and seven months was dissolved by the Presbytery of Lehigh, in April, 1891.

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\*Session Book, Vol. IV, p. 82.

†Session Book, Vol. IV, p. 87.

At a congregational meeting, September 1st, 1891, the Rev. D. M. Buchanan, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, at Oceanville, New York, was called to be our Pastor. Mr. Buchanan was installed December 3rd, 1891. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Belville. The charge to the Pastor was given by the Rev. Charles Rutherford, of Springfield, N. Y., and the charge to the people by the Rev. George C. Heckman, D. D., L. L. D., of Reading.

During all these years, our Church has grown and prospered. As we have seen, many have from time to time been added to our number. The little Church organized in 1835 with twenty-four members, reported to the General Assembly this year, 1895, a membership of four hundred and fifteen.

As the present pastorate is happily not yet a matter of history, it does not come within the limits of this sketch. We trust that it may long continue as prosperous and harmonious as it has been these past four years, and that the blessing of the great Head of the Church may ever rest upon Pastor and people.





*REV. DUNCAN M. BUCHANAN.*



## THE SESSION.

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“The Church Session is charged with maintaining the spiritual government of the congregation; for which purpose they have power to inquire into the knowledge and christian conduct of the members of the Church; \* \* \* \* to receive members into the Church; to admonish, to rebuke, to suspend, or exclude from the Sacrament, those who are found to deserve censure; to concert the best measures for promoting the spiritual interests of the congregation; and to appoint delegates to the higher judicatories of the Church.” \*

Immediately after the organization of our Church (Nov. 1st, 1835,) three Ruling Elders were elected and ordained. These were, Messrs. John Simpson, James Bigger and George W. Smith. From early in 1838 until 1842, Mr. Smith was the only Elder, and he and Mr Webster constituted the Session. The Sessional records of those four years show a vast amount of work done thoroughly and faithfully. At that time, Mr. Webster gave one-fourth of his time to Summit Hill, and Elder Smith conducted services on the Sabbath he was absent.

April 13th, 1842, Mr. John Ruddle and Dr. John D.

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\*Form of Government, Chap. IX, Sect. v..

Thompson were elected Elders. As the Session had so much to do in the early days of the Church, we feel that we may speak more particularly of their work before naming others who have held the office of Ruling Elder.

We notice, first, the extreme care of Session in receiving members into the Church. In those formative years great wisdom and discretion were needed in admitting persons to the communion of the Church. No doubt our Church owes much to the decided action and careful deliberation of the men who constituted the Session. There was no undue haste in the action of Session in this important matter, but there was most careful and thorough examination. When there was any doubt of the knowledge of spiritual things, the person was held back for a time and instructed by the Pastor. When there was any shadow on the reputation, the person was refused admission until truly penitent and all was cleared away. Even when certificates were presented, espically if they had been given long before, the person was carefully examined by Session. We note this in the Session Book: '*Resolved*, that the Session meet on the Sabbath evening after the Sacrament, to enable any persons who may desire to come forward at the next administration to the Lord's Table, to have timely and frequent opportunities of meeting with the Session, and *Resolved*, That for the same purpose they will meet once in four weeks, either on the second Sabbath of the month, or on the following Wednesday night.'

The Session also watched over the members of the Church with loving interest. The purity of the Church was very precious to them and they guarded it with jealous care. If possible not even one spot should mar the purity of the Church of Christ. Carelessness in attendance upon public worship, disregard of the Lord's Day, "speaking reproachfully and falsely" of one's neighbors, tavern-keeping, intemperance and profanity were all brought before the Session. If continued, a member of Session was appointed to visit and admonish the erring one. If the admonition was neglected the offender was cited to appear before Session and answer the charge. A case of interest is that of one who "on our Sacrament Sabbath did in company with several persons of the Romish Church, take a sleigh-ride to Tamaqua and attend the celebration of mass in a chapel there." The delinquent appeared before Session in answer to the citation, acknowledged the truth of the charges and declared herself deeply penitent for her sin. The Session decided that she "be suspended from the communion of the Church for six months."

In all cases, discipline was administered by Session only after a thorough examination of the case and long and prayerful consideration; and then done most lovingly and tenderly. The loving care of Session is evident from such records as these: "July 21st, 1840 During the present week the Pastor and Elder have visited and prayed with every family in communion with this Church residing in

the village.” \* Again: “October 1st, 1845. It was resolved to visit” certain families “and to converse with them on the sin of intemperance in the first case, and in the second of the violation of the Sabbath, and conduct unworthy of a Christian.” † “August 14th, 1844. It was resolved that a sermon be preached next Sabbath on the duties of the Session to the Congregation, and of their duty to the Session, and that the Session will during the month of September visit all of the members of the Church.” ‡

Mr. Ruddle resigned in 1852, and Dr. Thompson died in 1854, so that the Session was again reduced to two members, the Pastor and Elder Smith. It was enlarged in January 1856 by the election of four Ruling Elders: Messrs. Charles G. Rockwood, Nathan Fegley, Robert Porter and Joseph Forrest. In March 1861, Mr. A. G. Brodhead and Mr. Fisher Hazard were elected and ordained to the Eldership.

Mr. Hodge introduced a plan for increasing the efficiency of the Elders, which is fully stated in the Session Book. “The list of our communicants was divided into four parts, which were given to the four Elders. While the Elders are bound by their office to maintain a constant

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\*Session Book, Vol. 1, p. 29.

†Session Book, Vol. 1, p. 61.

‡Session Book, Vol. 1, p. 55.

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watchful over-sight over the whole Church, each Elder is expected by Session to take a special charge of those names which are upon his list. These he is expected to visit, and once in three months to report to the Session their spiritual condition, and to give any information concerning them that the Pastor or the Elders may desire. The Elders are to inform the Pastor from time to time of the sickness, affliction, trouble, etc. of those committed to their charge, and of whatever may be of assistance to him in his pastoral work.”\*

At that time the Session met in the study on Sabbath morning “to pray for the continuance of the blessing of God’s Spirit.”†

Since 1861, Ruling Elders have been elected as follows: February 1st, 1865, Messrs. Robert L. Cooke, William Patterson and Charles E. Webster. September 20th, 1874, Mr. John McAllister and Mr. John A. Esser. December 21st, 1879, Mr. James Ross and Mr. William T. King. December 14th, 1888, Messrs. John C. Dolon, E. R. Enbody and John Nichol. March 11th, 1892, Messrs. Andrew Ross, Charles S. Belford and Wm. D. Evans.

Of those who have served in the Session during these sixty years, Elders Thompson, Fegley, Hazard, Brodhead, Porter and James Ross have been called from the active duties of the Eldership to the higher service of Heaven.

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\*Session Book, Vol. II, p. 109.

†Session Book, Vol. II, p. 113.

Elder Ruddle resigned in 1852 and remained in the communion of the Church until his death in 1865. Elder G. W. Smith, one of the charter members of the Church, and a member of the Session from the day of its organization, resigned in 1861. After his removal from Mauch Chunk he was an active member of the First Church of Catasauqua, until his death.

Elder Forrest resigned in 1865, and continued in the membership of the Church until his death.

Elders Rockwood, Webster and Esser since their removal from Mauch Chunk have served as Ruling Elders in other churches. Elder William T. King, having been engaged in Home Missionary work in the Indian Territory, was ordained to the ministry by the Presbytery. Other Elders after leaving our town are active in the work of the churches with which they are connected.

Mr. A. G. Brodhead served as Elder for thirty years, Mr. Smith for twenty-six years, and Mr. Hazard for twenty-seven years.



## THE SABBATH-SCHOOL.

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“Sabbath-school work in Mauch Chunk antedates the existence of the Presbyterian Church by more than ten years. While the Church was organized in 1835, there was a school in 1825. There is reason for believing that the first Sabbath-school effort in Mauch Chunk was organized by Joseph P. Engles, a name afterward widely known in the Church, and for many years Superintendent of the Board of Publication. Mr. Engles not only organized it, but gave the school, books for a library. \* \* \* The school was organized and held its meetings for a time in a wheelwright shop, that stood very near, if not on the very spot, where the Church now stands. \* \* Like all the Sabbath-school work at the beginning, the school was union in its character. \* \* The first to withdraw from the school were the Methodists, who in the year 1832 had erected a church. This movement took away one-half of the school, and also the Superintendent. This left the school composed of Presbyterians and Episcopalians, under the charge of Mr. John Simpson. Mr. Simpson resigned his position as superintendent. The school then seems to have received a new impulse through the influence of Mr. William H. Sayre. He made a proposition that the work should be

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carried on unitedly by himself, Asa L. Foster, James W. Barnes and Nathan Patterson, beginning with the eldest, Mr. Foster. This arrangement continued until the organization of the Episcopal school. \* \* \* Though both Methodists and Episcopalians had withdrawn, the school was in a good condition, having several very competent and devoted teachers.”\*

In the Session Book we find this minute, bearing date May 8th, 1839: “It was resolved that though the Catechism is taught in the Sabbath-school, the Session will, during the summer, examine the children on their proficiency in it, at the close of the Sabbath afternoon service of each week.”†

On the 16th of February, 1840, the school was re-organized and placed under the care of Session. “The meeting for that purpose was held in the west end of the Public School building.” The admirable feature of the constitution is that the School in all its management is under the control of the Session of the Church. Article II says: ‘The Superintendent of the School shall be appointed by the Session; and the other officers, including the teachers shall be appointed by the Session and Superintendent’. Article III. ‘Any officer of the School is subject to removal at the discretion of the Session’. Article VI. ‘The course of study to be pursued in the School,

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\*Dr. Ferrier’s Historical Sermon.

†Session Book Vol. 1, p. 24.

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shall be prescribed by the Session.' The Constitution and By-Laws are excellent in all their features, and the success and prosperity of the School are largely due to the close and constant supervision of the Church."\*

Under date of February 10th, 1841, we find the following minute in the Session Book." "The Session having witnessed the progress of the School under these rules for one year are satisfied of their excellent adaptedness and usefulness. We have had an average attendance of sixty-seven scholars, and five male and nine female teachers. The following rules were added to those now in force.

Rule 1. The teachers shall assign to their classes the verses to be committed to memory, and they shall not hear more than fifteen verses in all, of hymns, Catechism, or Scripture recited at one time by any scholar.

Rule 2. The Catechisms (the introductory and Shorter) shall be recited once in the month, in the presence of the Pastor, the teachers asking the questions of the class, and the answer being made while standing, and in the hearing of the school." †

From the annual "Narrative of Religion" in the Session Book we glean many items of interest concerning the School. In 1842 Mr. Webster writes: "The Sabbath-school has been steadily increasing in interest and numbers, one of the teachers having united with the Church during

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\*Dr. Ferrier's Historical Sermon.

†Session Book, Vol. 1, p. 32.

the year.” \* In the “Narrative of 1843, we have seen how the Sabbath-school shared in the rich blessings of the revival during the preceding year. In 1844, we read: “The Sabbath-school has been kept up with much interest at three points throughout the year and at one during the summer.” † In 1845: “Our Sabbath school is large and flourishing; the greater part of the teachers are young persons, trained in our School, punctual in attendance, giving good diligence in their classes, but not followers of Jesus.” ‡

In 1843, we find a reference to “our Branch School at Union Farms” and Mr. Peter L. Munnes was appointed Superintendent. Of that School the Rev. J. H. Doremus, in an historical sermon preached at Summit Hill, in 1884, says: “Previous to Mr. Patterson’s removal to Summit Hill, he had been coming up from Mauch Chunk to Summit Hill to look after the works. On these trips he had found a few families residing in Bloomingdale Valley, near what was known as the ‘Old Farm’, and seeing the neglected condition of the children, proposed the establishing of a Sabbath-school in the log school house. On the following Sabbath he, with Rev. Richard Webster, John Ruddle and John Simpson from the Church at Mauch Chunk came up and organized the Sabbath-school. The Bloomingdale

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\*Session Book, Vol. I, p. 36.

†Session Book, Vol. I, p. 51.

‡Session Book, Vol. I, p. 58.

School was broken up by the removal of all the families at the 'Old Farm' in 1850."

In the Narrative for 1857, Elder Charles G. Rockwood, writes: "Our Sabbath-school prospers and is perhaps larger than ever before. We have on the roll two hundred and ninety scholars, and thirty one teachers with an average attendance at this season of the year of about two hundred scholars and teachers. The teachers keep up with interest a weekly meeting for study, which is well attended."\*

In 1863, we find the first mention of the Sabbath-school in Upper Mauch Chunk. In 1864, there were one hundred and four scholars in that school, and the total membership of the two schools was three hundred and twenty. This school continued in a flourishing condition for many years, but was afterwards disbanded.

Our Sabbath-school, in East Mauch Chunk, which has been so successful and is such a power for good, was organized in 1869, and in the report for 1895 it has one hundred and ninety-three scholars. Total membership in our Schools this year, six hundred and ninety-one.

After the re organization of the Sabbath-school in 1840, Mr. Nathan Patterson was appointed Superintendent, and he held that office until he moved to Summit Hill, in 1844. The Superintendents afterwards appointed by Ses-

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\*Session Book Vol. 11, p. 66.

sion were: Mr. John Ruddle, 1845; Mr. Lewis Hoyt, 1848; Mr. George W. Helme, 1849. After Mr. Helme's removal from town Mr. J. H. Siewers filled the Superintendent's place for a year and a half, but without accepting the office. About 1852 Mr. Charles G. Rockwood was appointed Superintendent, and he continued in office until his removal from Mauch Chunk in 1857. It was while Mr. Rockwood was Superintendent that the School removed from the Public School building to the Lecture room. That important event occurred, as we have seen, on the 20th of July, 1856.

In August, 1857, Session appointed Mr. A. G. Brodhead, Superintendent, which office he filled with loving faithfulness until his resignation, on July 2nd, 1882. Session placed on record the following minute: "Mr. Brodhead has served the Church with great success and acceptance in this capacity for twenty-five years. The resignation was accepted, and the thanks of Session given to Mr. Brodhead for his valuable services."\*

Mr. Fisher Hazard, who had been ordained Elder the same day as Mr. Brodhead, and who had served with him as Assistant Superintendent, during his entire term of office, continued to hold that position in the Sabbath-school until his sudden death, August 25th, 1888. He had held that office for thirty-one years, and had also been teacher of the Bible class for the same length of time. The

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\*Session Book, Vol. 1v, p. 26.



*FRESBYTERIAN CHAPEL, EAST MAUCH CHUNK.*





names of Mr. Brodhead and Mr. Hazard, so long and so closely associated as they are with the history of our Church and Sabbath school, have very sweet and tender memories for many of us, who grew up under their loving guidance.

Mr. John Nichol, was appointed Superintendent July 2nd, 1882, and we feel it is a cause for deep gratitude that we are able to add that he still holds that responsible position.

The Sabbath-school in East Mauch Chunk has also been blessed with earnest, faithful Superintendents who have devoted themselves to the interests and welfare of the School. Among these, we must name Mr. Charles E. Amidon, Mr. Frederick Moon, Mr. J. W. Lattig, Mr. Charles C. Brown, and Mr. John Muth as those who labored with untiring zeal and marked success in that office.

To this list of honored and devoted Superintendents, we add the names of Mr Wm. C. Morris and Mr. Frank B. Morris whose faithful work in the School in Upper Mauch Chunk is gratefully remembered.

We have given the names of our Superintendents but no mention can be made here of the faithful teachers who have by their fidelity and devotion done so much for the spiritual and temporal interests of the School they loved so well. While their names cannot be mentioned many hearts will recall them with tender love, for we know they are enshrined in their memories, and that they are written in

Heaven, whither so many have already gone to enter into their reward.

In Dr. Ferrier's historical sermon he said: "As this discourse is to be preserved as historical, it is the simplest justice that grateful mention should be made of Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Webb, who have done so much for years to encourage and sustain the singing in our School." Amid the many sad changes in the eighteen years that have passed since Dr. Ferrier preached that sermon we are thankful to be able to say that Mr. and Mrs. Webb are still with us as then and that the passing years have only increased our debt of love and gratitude to them.

"If we ask the question what has been done through the instrumentality of the School as a help to the Church, we can scarcely make answer. Eternity alone can unfold the result of these labors. Many have been trained here who have gone elsewhere, and are giving their testimony to other churches and other communities. We believe that some have gone from our School to Heaven—sealed for a better world before they left the School. We might mention their names. Some of them are fresh in your memory, and dear to you as your own loved ones. The whole generation that is coming on to fill our pews in the Church, to occupy the seats at the Communion Table, and very soon the offices of the Church, have all been educated in our School. I look with wonder and astonishment and thankfulness at what God has done for you. It is not for any

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who work in this School to be discouraged. God has put before your eyes too many rewards of your labor; not to speak of eternity, he has held up before your wondering eyes too many rich, ripe clusters that only tell what may yet be gathered in the future. 'Be steadfast, unmovable.'\*

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\*Dr. Ferrier's Historical Sermon.

## HOME MISSIONARY WORK.

We must remember that in the early days of our Church, it was the centre of active Home Missionary work in this entire region, even while it was itself struggling for an existence. This work, unusual in such a weak church, was the result of the ardent missionary spirit of the first Pastor. Mr. Webster's friend, Rev. D. X. Junkin, D. D., wrote: "From that time (December 6th, 1835) to the hour—indeed, to the moment of his death, he continued to preach Christ crucified to that people, and at many other points in the Pennsylvania coal regions. He was emphatically the Apostle of the Coal Fields. He threw his earnest heart, his clear, well furnished mind, his untiring zeal, and his worldly substance, into the work of evangelizing the population of the mining region and towns. With a slender frame, he toiled on, hoped on, until with God's blessing, his own immediate flock was enlarged and became an important and efficient church, and churches were organized, and houses of worship reared in all that region. He was indefatigable in preaching, traveling, visiting, corresponding and sustaining missionaries. Whilst his own stipend was very small, he relinquished his allowance from the Board of Missions, that it might be given to other laborers in his favorite mountain-field.

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Often, like his Master, did he travel on foot great distances, over steep and rugged roads, to carry the Gospel to the destitute, and this without hope of earthly reward.”\*

As we have already seen, a number of our church members lived at Summit Hill, and from 1835 to 1843, Mr. Webster preached there one-fourth of his time, and administered the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper twice a year. At one time he remarks that a large congregation was present, and twenty-one persons communed. “In May, 1839, twenty-three persons were dismissed from this Church, and were organized by a Committee of Newton Presbytery, into the Church of Summit Hill.”† Later, April 13th, 1842, we find this minute: “The Session having heard that the congregation of Summit Hill and Tamaqua, residing in Tamaqua, intend to make application to the Presbytery, at its Spring meeting, for permission to employ for the three summer months, Mr. William E. Schenck, a licentiate of New Brunswick Presbytery, it was resolved that the monies now in our Sacred Fund, \$13.25, together with what may be raised at the Monthly Concert in May, June, July and August, be devoted to the support of Mr. Schenck, as the missionary at Tamaqua, Port Clinton and the vicinity.”‡ In the Narrative of Religion, in 1843, Mr. Webster says: “The Missionary collection

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\*Biographical Sketch.

†Session Book, Vol. II, p. 1.

‡Session Book, Vol. I, p. 36.

has been larger than in any previous year ; with a portion of it we sustained for three months a preacher at Summit Hill and Port Clinton, and as a fruit, the former place is now supplied with the preaching of the Gospel every Sabbath, and is nearly as well able to sustain a Pastor as we are ourselves."\*

As a result of Mr. Webster's missionary labors churches were organized at Summit Hill, Port Clinton, Beaver Meadow, Conyngham Valley, Tamaqua, White Haven, Hazleton and Weatherly.

In the "Narrative" for 1844, Mr. Webster, says: "Preaching is maintained on Sabbath afternoons at Union Farms and Nesquehoning, and is well attended."† In his early ministry he also preached regularly at Weissport and Parryville. In 1843, there was a deep religious interest at Nesquehoning, and for several weeks Mr. Webster went there every night in the bitter cold of winter and preached. Long afterward, in 1860 and 1861, we find that a missionary (Rev. Mr. Darroch,) was laboring at Nesquehoning in addition to his work at Weatherly and Gnadenthen. At his request, Rev. Mr. Hodge, with a Committee of Session, twice visited Nesquehoning, and received into the membership of our Church eleven persons residing in that village. The Lord's Supper was administered in Nesquehoning, March 31st, 1861, by the Rev. J. A.

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\*Session Book, Vol. 1, p. 45.

†Session Book, Vol. 1, p. 51.

Hodge and Rev. Mr. Darroch.\* Our Church had a special interest in the work at Lehighton from its early days. Rev. Dr. Belville preached there regularly, and when unable to do so on account of failing health, he saw that the pulpit was supplied every Sabbath afternoon, until a pastor was called. Unfortunately, no record has been kept of this interesting work, and of the part our Church took in it. The Lehighton Church was organized in 1872.

We review this work that the present membership of our Church may have some idea of the missionary spirit which animated its founders, and the desire they felt to share the privileges they enjoyed, viz : The regular preaching of the Word, an organized church, and a permanent place of worship.

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\*Session Book, Vol. II, p. 116.

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## MINISTERS.

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One of the greatest honors that can be given to a Church is to see her sons enter the ministry. Our Church has had the privilege of having seven from her membership ordained to preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the "Narrative" of 1843, Mr. Webster, writes: "It is with great delight that we mention that one of our members is pursuing a course of study, preparatory for the ministry,—a young man of approved piety, and discretion and promise."\* Again, in 1849: "Three members of our Church are preparing for the ministry."†

These three, who were graduates of Lafayette College and Princeton Theological Seminary, were: Rev. Edward Kennedy, ordained by the Presbytery of Winchester, in 1851, now "Honorably Retired;" Rev. James Scott, ordained by the Second Presbytery, of Philadelphia, in 1854, died 1861; Rev. Joseph W. Porter, ordained by the Presbytery, of Philadelphia, in 1860, died in 1890. Two sons of the first Pastor entered the ministry after graduating from Princeton College and Theological Seminary.

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\*Session Book, Vol. 1, p. 44.

†Session Book, Vol. 1, p. 71.



Rev. William S. C. Webster, licensed by the Presbytery of Luzerne, and ordained by the Presbytery of Lehigh, in 1872, now Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, at Islip, New York, and the Rev. Richard B. Webster, licensed in 1872 by the Presbytery of Lehigh, and ordained in 1882, by the Presbytery of Lackawanna, Pastor of the Westminster Church, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

Besides those named, Mr. Peter Munnes, a member of our Church from 1842 to 1846, the leader of our choir, and the Superintendent of the "Branch Sabbath-school," after leaving Mauch Chunk, was taken under the care of the Presbytery of Baltimore, and licensed to preach. He was ordained in 1853, and died in 1855 while engaged in active Home Missionary work in Mississippi.

Mr. William T. King, an Elder of our Church and active in all departments of its work, after leaving us engaged in missionary work in the Indian Territory. As his usefulness increased, Presbytery licensed him to preach, and later, in view of his efficiency, and faithfulness, and his many qualifications for work in that wide field, he was ordained. He is still a Home Missionary in Oklahoma.

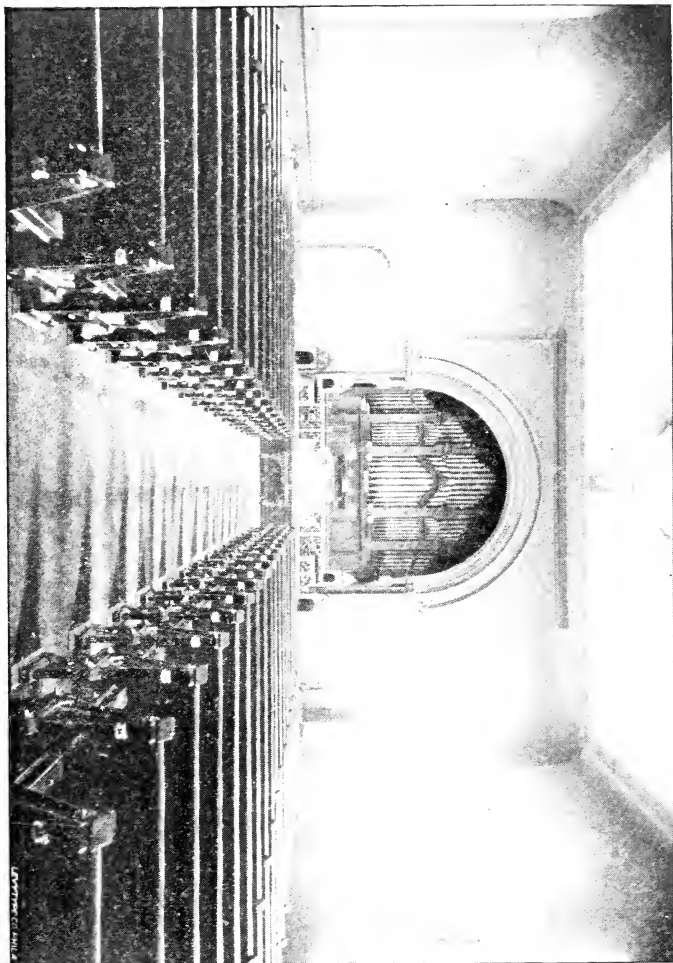
## THE CHURCH.

A strong attachment to the church building has ever been a marked characteristic of our people.

We have seen that the little stone church was utterly inadequate for the growing congregation, and that the subject of a new church was agitated long before the work was begun. About 1847 or 1848 several of the young ladies proposed holding a fair to raise money for the furnishing of the new church. The project met with general favor, and we are told that the young people of the town, irrespective of denomination, heartily co-operated. This fair, which seems to have been the first in Mauch Chunk, was held in a building belonging to the Company, at the foot of Broadway, near the river. It was a great success, and the proceeds were invested with the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company and remained at interest until 1859 when the new church was ready to be furnished. The zeal shown by one of the young ladies at that fair has only increased with the passing years, and our Church owes much to her executive ability, wisdom, untiring devotion and excellent taste.

We have been singularly favored in having in our congregation many wealthy families who have given freely

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and largely to the church, and we hope that in future years the memory of those who have so lovingly cared for its temporal interests, and have so often come to its help in time of need, will be cherished and honored by those who enjoy the fruits of their liberality.

We cannot fail to make mention here of the Board of Trustees, who have so faithfully watched over, and guarded the interests and welfare of our Church. On this Board, have always been successful business men, who have freely given their time, their experience and their wealth to the service of Church. In times of financial distress, when the future looked dark, these generous men have again and again come forward and relieved the Church from debt and anxiety.

The Church has been renovated and remodeled from time to time, until it is now so beautiful and complete: our church-home, endeared to us by the tender memories and associations of a life-time. Handsome memorial windows keep in constant remembrance, the names of some, who have loved the Church and have borne such an honored part in her history. The beautiful brass pulpit and choir rail were presented by Mrs. E. Polk, in loving memory of her daughter. Mr. Samuel B. Price has given a lasting memorial also in the very valuable library, intended for the use of the Pastor of this Church. Such a library is a rare gift, and the Pastors here will always have cause to thank Mr. Price for his splendid generosity and thoughtfulness.

The "Bertsch Fund", the noble legacy of Mr. Danie Bertsch, Sr., has proved a real blessing to our Church and Sabbath-school, for almost twenty years. Another of these devoted friends, Mr. E. B. Leisenring, who recently died, has left a similar gift for the permanent benefit of the Church and School.

The beautiful little chapel in East Mauch Chunk, also testifies to the desire of our people to have all that pertains to the house of the Lord, perfect and complete.

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## BENEVOLENCE.

Even when our Church was weak and poor, it was urged by the Pastor to contribute to the benevolent work of the Presbyterian Church.

It is pleasant to know, that even in those early days, the ladies were interested in missionary work. In 1838, a few met and discussed plans of work, and a sewing society was organized. After correspondence with the Secretary of our Board of Foreign Missions, definite work was assigned; the money was raised to buy the materials, and soon the ladies were busily engaged in making some articles of clothing for the out-fit of missionaries, about to go to the foreign field. Our Foreign Missionary Society is after all, only the successor of this brave little society, which continued in active work for many years.

As to the gifts of the Church, we find in the Statistical Report for 1840, that \$45.00 was contributed for Foreign Missions. As the work of the Presbyterian Church increased and new Boards were established, we find that our Church contributed something to each one. In 1844, we find this record: "The causes of benevolence excite too little interest in the Church; the sum contributed is really far below our ability, and in fact four-fifths of it are given by four or five persons."\* Yet those contributions compare favorably with those of the present prosperous

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\*Session Book, Vol. I. p. 52.

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days. In 1849, with only ninety members, the Church gave for Foreign Missions, \$85.00 ; Domestic Missions, \$20 ; Education, \$20.00.

In 1841, the Session established what was called the "Sacred Fund," and collections for it were taken on the first Sabbath evening of each month. We have seen that this Fund was used in direct missionary work in this vicinity.

As the Church increased in numbers and wealth, the benevolent contributions advanced. This was especially marked during the pastorates of Drs. Belville and Ferrier, and was no doubt owing to the faithful presentation of the Boards of our Church, and information regarding their work by the Pastors. Information and intelligence are the indispensable forerunners of interest and benevolence.

Special collections have been taken from time to time, and always with great success. Perhaps the one in which our people took most interest, was the Million Dollar Fund for the Board of Ministerial Relief, in 1888. Elder A. G. Brodhead had that matter in hand, and by special canvass of the congregation, and by collections in Church and Sabbath-school, the sum of \$1,059.97 was raised. The benevolence of our congregation is not limited to the Presbyterian Church, for generous contributions are made every year to the great undenominational agencies which are doing such a grand work for Christ.



## THE CHOIR.

Our Session Book tells us, that in June, 1844, a communication was brought before Session, "concerning the formation of a Choir." The matter was placed in the hands of Elder Ruddle, and, a few days later, he reported that the plan proposed by Session had been accepted, and the choir organized. It was ordered that the plan be recorded on the minutes. This was the plan: "The Session of the Presbyterian Church, anxious to encourage any attempt to improve the music of the Church, deputed Mr. John Ruddle to see Mr. Struthers, and to propose to him and others, through him, that they form themselves into a Choir under these regulations:

- "1. They shall select a leader, the Session having the right to confirm or reject.
- "2. At all times of public worship, the old familiar tunes to be sung, except now and then.
- "3. At all times of public worship, the Choir is to observe a decorum becoming the House of God, and to expel from their number any person, when informed of his or her misbehavior.

"This arrangement to cease whenever the Choir shall refuse to dismiss any member who may be complained of by the Session ""\*

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\*Session Book, Vol. I, pp. 53, 54.

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Apparently complaints were made, for, in January, 1847, the Session took the following action:

“1. No complaint against the Choir or any member of it shall be noticed, unless formally made, and accompanied by a responsible name, and when so made, the party accused shall be notified and full opportunity given to disprove the charge.

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“3. The Viol is not to be used, unless there be necessity, during the first two Psalms on Sabbath morning, and not at all on Sacramental Sabbath morning.

“4. The House of God is never to be used on His holy Day for a place to practice sacred music.”\*

The “viol” alluded to was a grievance to some of the older people, and so strong was the opposition at one time that one of the members of the Church, who loved its peace and order, had the offending instrument “stolen” and hidden away. The viol was used in the “new church,” but was in time superseded by a melodeon, which gave place to the organ in 1874. The largest contribution to the purchase of the organ came from Mrs. George Belford. The same generous friend who took such a deep interest in all that pertained to the Church, was specially devoted to its music. As one instance of her liberality, when the Hymnal was introduced

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\*Session Book, Vol. 1, p. 63.

in 1874, Mrs. Belford supplied copies of it to all who were unable to buy it for themselves.

Mr. Charles H. Webb was appointed leader of the Choir in 1866, and has held that responsible and trying position ever since. Under his energetic leadership, and owing to his untiring and devoted efforts, our Church music is always hearty and inspiring. Mr. Webb also has the entire charge of the music in the Sabbath-school and for twenty-five successive years, he has patiently taught the Christmas music, which is such a delightful feature of our celebrations.

In connection with the music, we may speak of the splendid piano, one of the last gifts to the Sabbath-school, of Mrs. Andrew A. Douglas. Its sweet tones in the week, night meetings, and in the Sabbath-school, speak to us of the generous friend whose interest in the Church never waned, and who has now joined the "Choir invisible."

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## ORGANIZATIONS.

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In these days, when societies of all kinds are multiplied indefinitely, our Church has with the wise, conservative spirit which ever characterized it, adopted only those which are most useful and permanent, and which have the unqualified approval of our honored General Assembly. Having adopted them, and placed them under the care of Session, they have become part of our Church life and history.

The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, organized May 13th 1878; the Little Workers for Jesus, started the same year; and the Ferrier Band, organized in 1882, have proved a permanent blessing to the Church in keeping warm in the hearts of the women, young people and children, the interest in the work of Christ in heathen lands.

The same may be said of the Home Missionary work in the Society, organized in January 1888, and the Stevenson Band, started in the same year.

The Christian Endeavor Society, organized in 1885, continues to prosper, and help the young people. A Junior Society was started in 1893, and the Chapel Christian Endeavor was organized also in November 1893. In these societies we hope to see developed the spirit of loyalty and devotion to the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## THE MEMBERSHIP.

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Our Church has great cause to thank God for its loving, loyal, faithful membership. In the early days when there were only a few members and most of them hard-working people, this devotion to the Church was specially marked. It meant a great deal in those days, for people to pay their pew rent and contribute to the missionary work of the Presbyterian Church. Yet the very fact that it did cost a struggle, only strengthened the character and deepened the self-respect of those who were willing to make a sacrifice, that they might contribute to the support of the Church. We are told of one, who in addition to the cares of a busy life, took in washing, that she might have money to pay her pew rent. We hope that that strong, sturdy spirit of personal interest and responsibility, will never be lost.

But it is not only of the temporal interests we would speak, but of the piety, the prayerfulness, the consecration of many of the members of our Church, and of the beautiful Christian lives, which have been and are being lived in our midst. Zealous in every good work, abundant in labor, joyfully serving the Lord, they have been a blessing not only to our Church, but to the entire community.

Many have gone from us to other places, and in their new homes, they have entered into church work with the

same zeal and activity. We miss them, we need them, but we can also rejoice in the wide-spread influence for good thus exerted by those who were once with us, and who still look back to this as the Church they love best.

From the communion of our Church, many have gone to the "House not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Parted from us for a time, their memories and their influence linger in the Church and the town, as a continual blessing.

"With us their names shall live  
Through long succeeding years.  
Embalmed with all our hearts can give,  
Our praises and our tears."

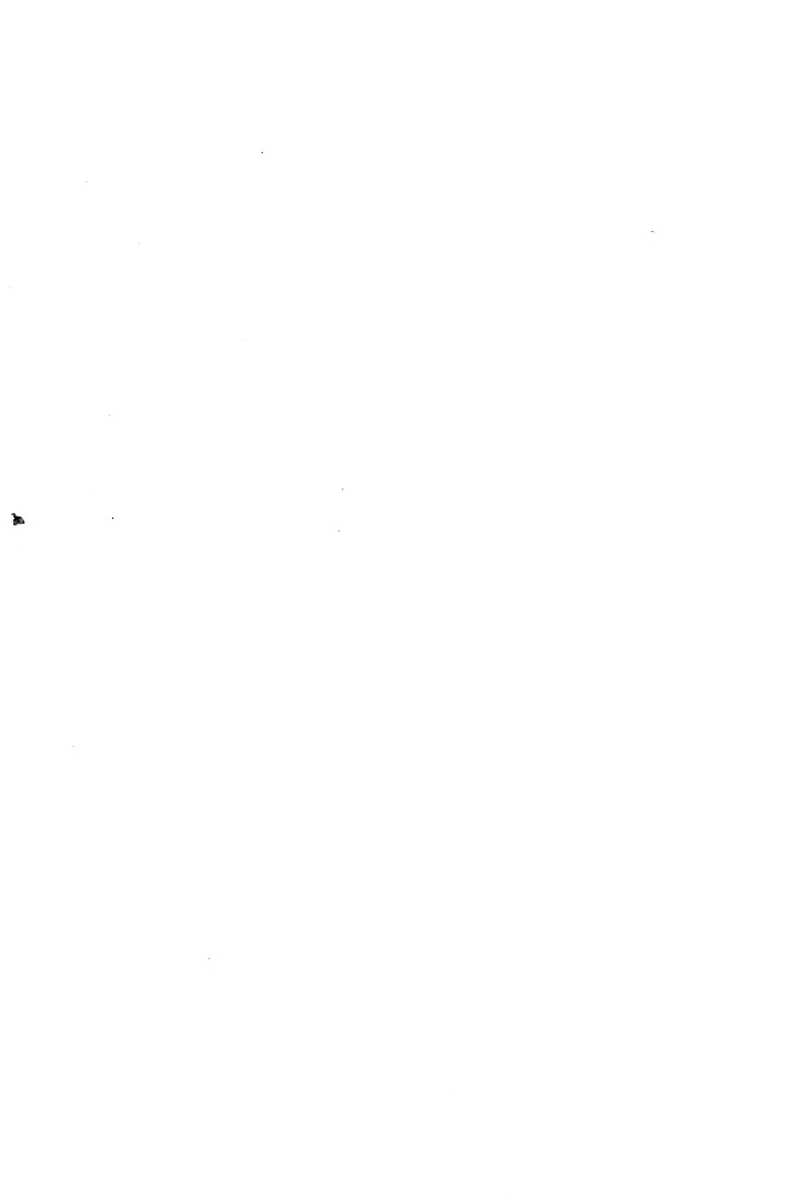
Within the past few years, the membership has changed rapidly, and it is painful to miss so many we have loved and honored all our lives. The officers and members, who have for so many years watched over the Church and all its interests, with such loving, unwearied care, are passing away, leaving the Church and the world the poorer for their absence. With it all, we can turn away from the sorrow and pain of these changes, and with strong faith, look forward to a happy re-union, as we realize more fully, the true unity of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, on earth and in Heaven.

"One family we dwell in Him,  
One church above, beneath,  
Though now divided by the stream,  
The narrow stream of death."











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